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Turner says the CIA is 'almost certain' 1,300 Afghan civilians were massacred

Washington (AP)—The Central Intelligence Agency is "almost certain" Afghan troops acting under orders from Soviet advisers massacred 1,300 civilians last year, the agency's director says in a letter to Senator Lloyd Bentsen.

"We have no on-the-spot confirmation from our own sources, but a strikingly similar account appeared in a Pakistani newspaper," Adm. Stansfield Turner, the director of central intelligence, wrote Mr. Bentsen (D, Texas).

Mr. Bentsen, who released Admiral Turner's response yesterday, had asked the CIA whether it could confirm a report that appeared in the *Christian Science Monitor* of a massacre in Kerala, a town

in eastern Afghanistan, last April.

Admiral Turner said the CIA has reports of other "atrocities" last year in Afghanistan, while it is likely that additional incidents have not been reported.

The CIA director said the incidents that have come to the attention of the CIA include:

- The destruction by Afghan troops of a village that refused to cooperate with the Kabul regime and the killing of 20 of the village's inhabitants. Children were mutilated in front of their parents before the slayings.

- The killing of 300 villagers, reportedly as retribution for refusal to cooperate.

- Aggravated rapes by Afghan soldiers, some resulting in the victims' deaths.

Mr. Bentsen responded by calling for an investigation by the United Nations or other international organization of alleged atrocities in Afghanistan.

The senator said he understood that behind-the-scenes negotiations might make discretion necessary.

"At the same time, I believe very strongly that the world must never become so desensitized that allegations of mass murder are not met by the outrage of people around the world, in a clear, unmistakable, unyielding manner," Mr. Bentsen wrote.